

Working Group on Expanded Learning Opportunities
Testimony: UP for Learning
November 5, 2015

Goal: Explore how ELO's could be better utilized in Vermont to support personalized learning plans and proficiency-based graduation requirements (Act 77).

Challenge 1: Building public understanding and support for a fundamental change in how students, teachers and the community perceive the purpose of education and learning, and the means to this end.

Focusing Questions:

- *WHY change?*
- *WHAT does it look and feel like when you are part of this new model?*

Solution:

-Capitalize on, expand & coordinate existing communications development efforts.
(AOE, Communicating School Redesign initiative, Shaping Our Future Together statewide campaign, Youth and Adults Transforming Schools Together initiative, Nellie Mae communications work)

Challenge 2: Move from a problem-focused and passive/resistant frame regarding ELO/PLP development, to a solutions-focused vision and inclusive process to inform and support change.

Focus Question:

HOW do you take part in creating and optimizing new ELO opportunities from the unique perspective of your stakeholder group?

Solutions:

1. Craft tools and strategies so that each stakeholder group is actively engaged in shaping education from their unique perspectives. Harness the wisdom of students, teachers and community/business members who deeply understand ELOs – both in their intention and regarding implementation issues.
2. Capture and share this wisdom, mobilizing these “early adopters” as guides and coaches for schools just beginning this journey.
3. Build and continually reinforce a stronger and stronger bridge between the learning resources of schools and the opportunities embedded within their communities. Create a developmentally appropriate continuum of ways to “walk this bridge” over a child’s educational experience.
4. Tell stories! Continually reinforce how each of us can be part of the solution!

Resources: www.upforlearning.com
www.shapingourfuturetogether.org